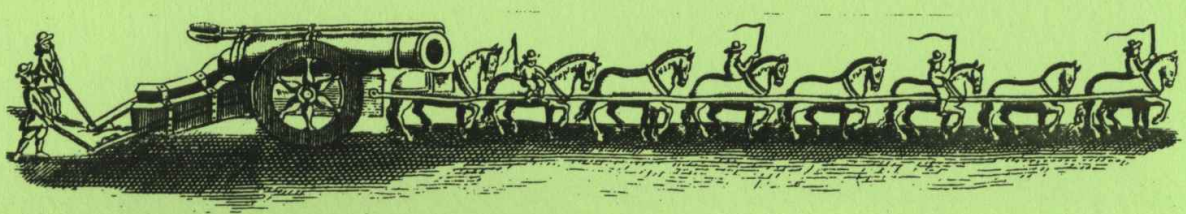
MEMORIES OF WHY I STOPPED BEING A MAN

||||| CAConrad

for Jason Dodge

it's normal
if your cock
gets hard while
you are shooting
my uncle told me
on my first deer hunt
Pythagoras knew the music
of Jupiter and Mercury
long before NASA
but to begin again
no hero itching
at the door
that never-ending search for weakness in
neighbors siblings coworkers rival football teams
after seeing the open body of muscle and blood
we had horrible ideas about what to do with our lives
imagine how they gathered around the first
cannon ever fired sweaty excited rock hard
before he died Kalashnikov confessed
of suffering unbearable nightmares
surrender your nouns to my verbs
he said he said he said he said
my old man complains about raising money
for a dying woman because she survived and is happy
if he asks for his money back I hope she slaps the shit out of him
it's not nice to stand motionless by someone's
grave until they climb in
but we are in the USA
where 45,000 people were
victims of gun violence last year
if I want my nouns to die
or soil themselves
it's none of your fucking business
isn't that the way it goes around here
after a million years of dreaming the solution is still the same
hold me to your bruised song until it warms me right



CAConrad received a 2019 Creative Capital grant and has also received a Pew Fellowship in the Arts, as well as The Believer Magazine Book Award and The Gil Ott Book Award. The author of 9 books of poetry and essays, *While Standing in Line for Death* (Wave Books) won the 2018 Lambda Book Award. They teach at Columbia University in New York City, and Sandberg Art Institute in Amsterdam. Please look for CA's books and the documentary *The Book of Conrad* from Delinquent Films online at http://bit.ly/88CAConrad

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